

Santo Domingo

I. Picturesque Islanders of the Caribbean

By Percy F. Martin, F.R.G.S.

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IF for naught beyond ranking as the resting-place of the great Columbus's honoured bones and the first white colony established in the New World, Santo Domingo would challenge sympathetic attention. But it possesses other claims, for it is perhaps one of the most beautiful and fruitful of tropical islands in the Western Hemisphere, and, like Cuba and Porto Rico, is progressively attracting foreign capital—mostly American—and responding encouragingly thereto.

Realizing the benefits of work and thrift under the tyrannical tuition of their Spanish conquerors, and later on under French taskmasters and British buccaneers—neither very gentle in their methods—the people have become industrious almost in spite of themselves. But for their fiery temperament, their inordinate love of political excitement, violence, and a propensity—common to all coloured races—to extravagance in expenditure, the Santo Domingans might become a highly-prosperous nation. At least, they succeed in being a picturesque and an interesting people.

Where Want is Hardly Known

Their island, notwithstanding devastation caused by innumerable sanguinary revolutions and occasional seismic disturbances, still contains many flourishing plantations—sugar, coffee, banana, and cocoa; its rich pastoral stretches support thousands of head of fat, sleek cattle. Cotton, equal to the best Sea Island quality, and tobacco, even superior to that of Cuba, grow luxuriantly.

When Columbus landed on the island, on his first voyage (1492), he found the natives peacefully smoking; and since

that period tobacco has been one of the country's chief crops, just as cocoa and sugar, cultivated since 1506, have brought about its greatest wealth. No inhabitant can ever know the meaning of the word "want," except when a main crop fails. And that is rarely.

It is but just to state that, unwelcome as they were and unpopular as they remain, the "Yankees" have helped these dusky islanders not only to live at comparative peace with one another, but to make more money out of their natural products than ever they gained before; and, what is of yet greater importance, they have shown them how to save it.

Fortunes in Sugar and Cocoa

Sugar-cane is now grown scientifically, and fetches correspondingly higher prices, proving an extraordinary tonic to business throughout the country; cocoa, ranking as second in value for export, now secures preference in foreign markets; yet other resources, up till now largely neglected, must bring added wealth to the island community.

Not as yet are the people rich, but they are gradually realizing the value of economy, and are less inclined to squander. Little ready capital is needed to engage in the growing of their crops—cocoa less even than others; the livelihood of the larger number of planters depends upon this staple product.

So partial are the small Dominguan planters to cocoa, that they are inclined to concentrate upon it to the exclusion of other foodstuffs that might just as easily be raised. A good cocoa season means prosperity for the whole island.

It would be venturesome to assert that all risks of further political

SANTO DOMINGO & ITS PEOPLE

upheavals have been removed by improvement in the people's well-being; no one can tell what events may follow upon the evacuation of the island by the American marines, who have been in control since November 29, 1916. After four centuries of constant revolution and bloodshed, it would be unreasonable to expect Santo Domingo to subside suddenly into a condition of peacefulness and tranquillity. Even Cuba, a neighbouring and largely a "white" island, which has enjoyed an additional decade of North American supervision, becomes restive at times.

Left alone, and not incited to cause trouble, the Santo Domingans are a peaceful and happy people. Like all dark-skinned races, they revel in almost perpetual sunshine; their rich soil provides them with the fruits of the earth in super-abundance; beyond the few trivial taxes imposed—heavier since the Americans instituted a system of collection that there is no evading—and

periodical crop-failures, they have but little to trouble them.

Home life is not without its sympathetic touches, for the negro is an affectionate father and the negress a no less indulgent—if she is a somewhat unreliable—mother.

Each native habitation—sometimes a mere hutch, shack, or bothy, formed of dried grasses or old railway sleepers, roofed with sheets of discarded corrugated iron, or protected from the elements by old rags stuffed into holes and crevices—has its full complement of sprawling and mischievous piccaninies, many, alas, little thieves and pilferers from their birth.

Far different are the homes of the whites and the superior class of coloured residents. Built on the "Colonial" style, that is to say consisting of one floor only, raised some six feet above the ground upon brick or stone arches so as to allow the winds free play beneath, the majority of houses are large, roomy,



NOVEL NATIVE FASHION OF PACKING TOBACCO

Tobacco forms one of the chief products of Santo Domingo, and its harvest provides employment for a large proportion of the population. This burly labourer is packing tobacco for pipe smokers; the stripped leaves are wrapped in a large palm leaf, pressed into a long cylindrical roll and tightly roped, and are then left to dry for a certain time before shipment to market.

Photo, Rollo H. Beck



SLOW BUT SURE METHOD OF CARRYING BALES OF TOBACCO TO TOWN

The inhabitants of the Dominican Republic are of mixed races, African, Spanish, and Indian predominating. All have an equal disinclination for hurry, and in a country where roads are bad and railways few are perfectly content to jog along on lethargic oxen, carrying in capacious saddlebags the dried leaves of the tobacco grown with comparatively little labour on the inland plantations

and cool. Fine wire-screens protect the windows and doors from venomous insects, which swarm here as in all tropical countries; elegant Empire furnishings, with North American labour-saving devices and "notions," adorn the interior. These were brought to the island in the eighteenth century when the French invaded it and turned out the Spaniards—only themselves to be dispersed by the Haitians under Toussaint L'Ouverture.

Each domicile is embowered in luxuriant, odoriferous tropical gardens, containing specimens of the most beautiful plants and flowers to be found in the world. Food is abundant, but the natives with money to spend are not content with what grows at their doors; they hunger for European or American delicacies, and larger and larger grow these extravagances imported from foreign markets. From the nearest—the United States—alone the imports

in 1900 advanced in value from \$1,300,000 (in round figures about £260,000, or say, 40.2 per cent. of the whole imports), to \$18,800,000 (about £3,760,000, or, say 93.1 per cent.) in 1918.

Spanish is the dominant language; in this tongue all official documents and the many news-sheets—some very anarchistic prints, of no small danger to the peace of the community at election times—are published; a fair amount of French, but scarcely any English is spoken. American coinage has been introduced, but the debased currency of the country itself passes freely.

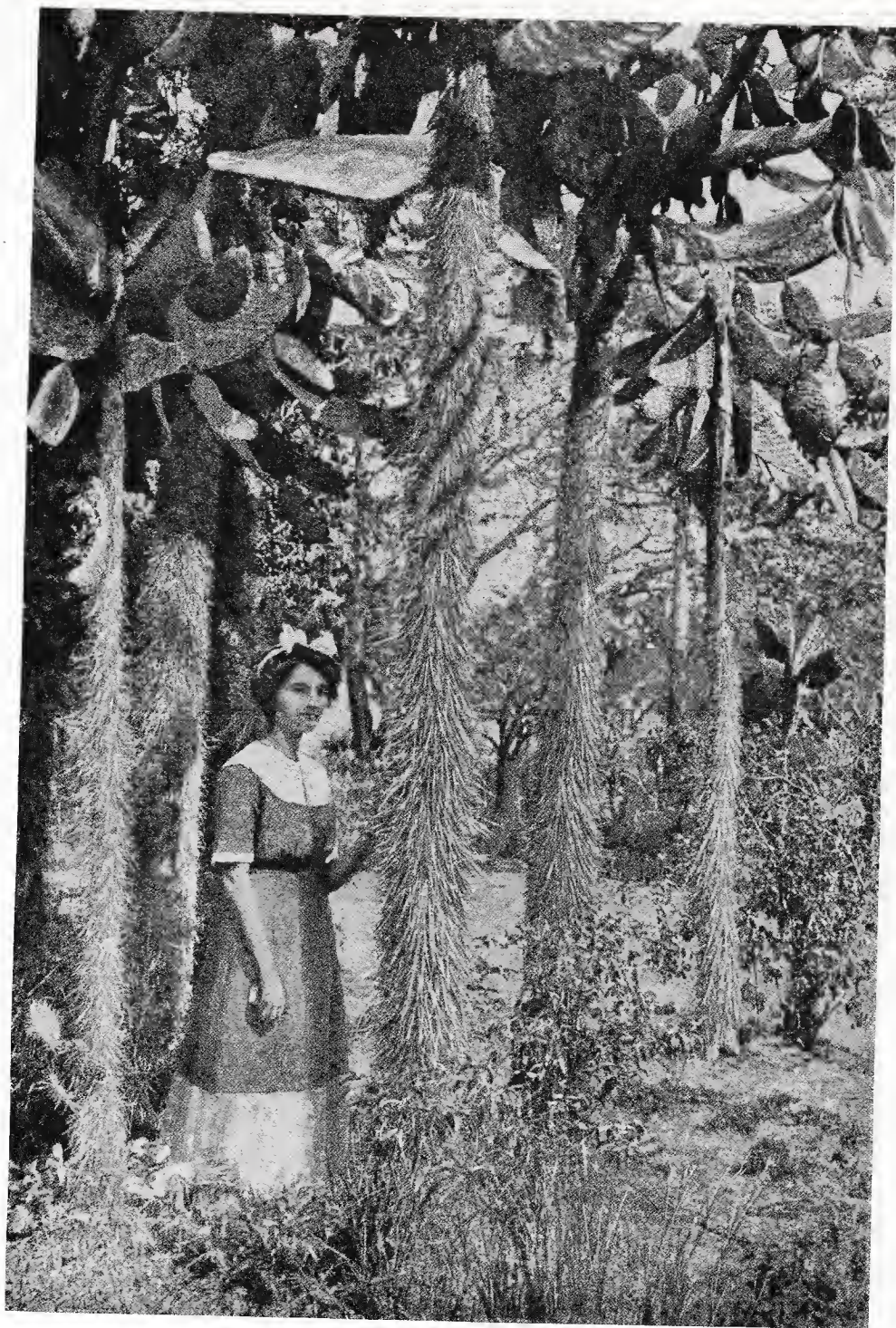
The French introduced and still control the telegraphs and telephones; the government likewise has a system—but both are extremely deficient in service and decadent in point of maintenance.

Living—and living well—with so little physical effort, the inhabitants of Santo



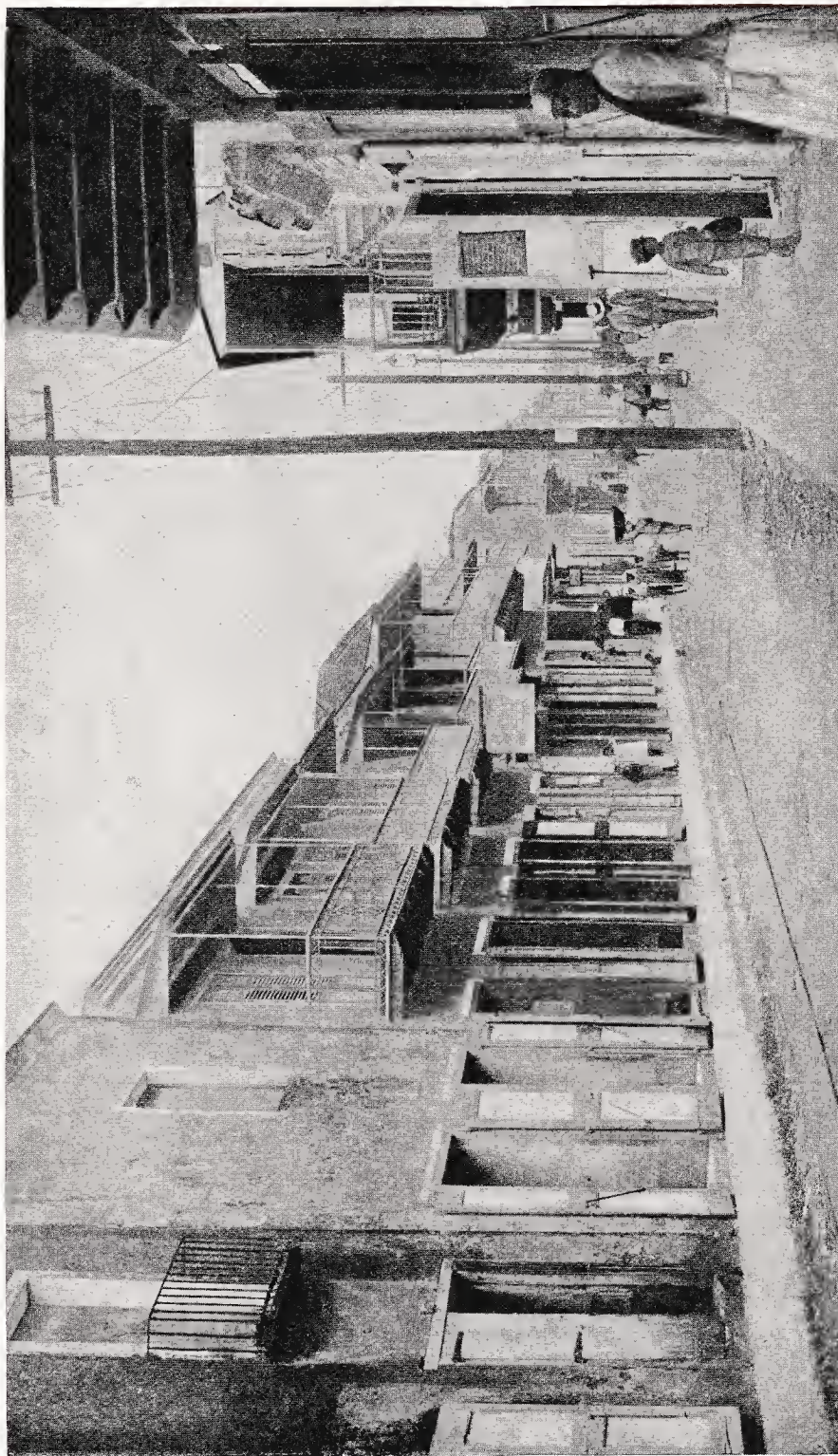
SANTO DOMINGO : THE CRADLE-LAND OF THE TOBACCO PLANT

The earliest European reference to tobacco was made by Columbus on his return from the West Indies in 1492, and the plant was first brought to Europe in 1558 by a Spanish physician. Some authorities claim that the word is derived from "tobaco," the name of a peculiar Y-shaped instrument used by the old inhabitants of Santo Domingo island for inhaling tobacco smoke through the nostrils



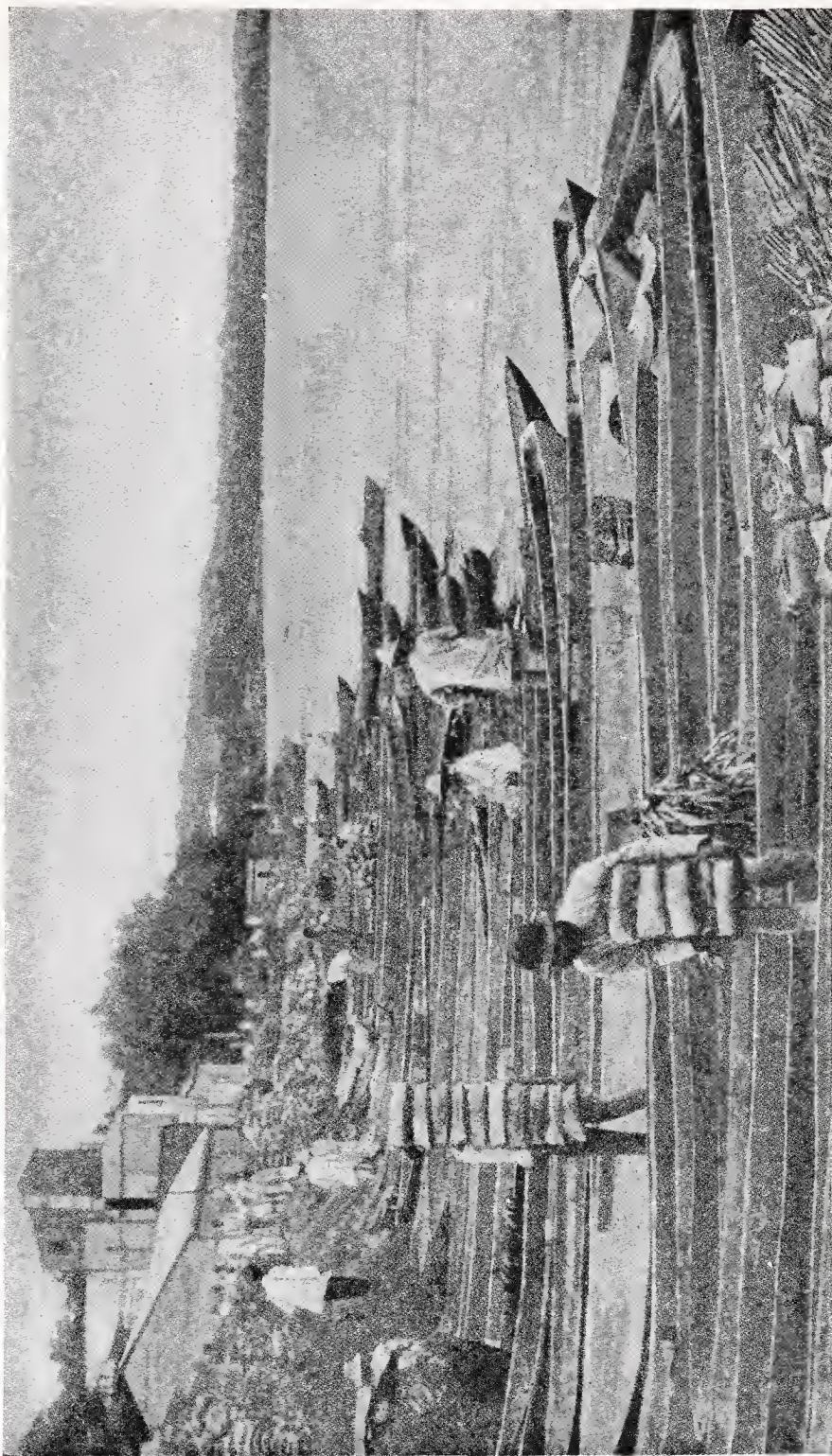
IN A CACTUS GROVE OF SANTO DOMINGO

The country possesses a luxuriant vegetation, and among indigenous plants are numerous specimens of the prickly cactus. Many obstacles have hindered improvement and progress where both island and islanders are concerned, and Santo Domingo has been referred to as "beautiful, majestic, and fruitful, waiting only the assistance of law and sound government to take its proper place in civilization."



ONE OF THE MAIN STREETS IN SAN DOMINGO, THE CHIEF CITY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

San Domingo lies on the south coast of the island at the mouth of the Ozama river. It was founded in 1496 by Bartholomew Columbus, brother of Christopher Columbus, and was long the most important place in the New World, and it is still claimed that its archbishop is the primate of the West Indies. It is poorly built, the streets straight but narrow, and the houses chiefly constructed of stone pierced with large doors and windows; but since 1916, when the U.S.A. set up a government with naval officers at the heads of all departments, many beneficial changes have been brought about.



EARLY MORNING ACTIVITY ON A RIVER BANK IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

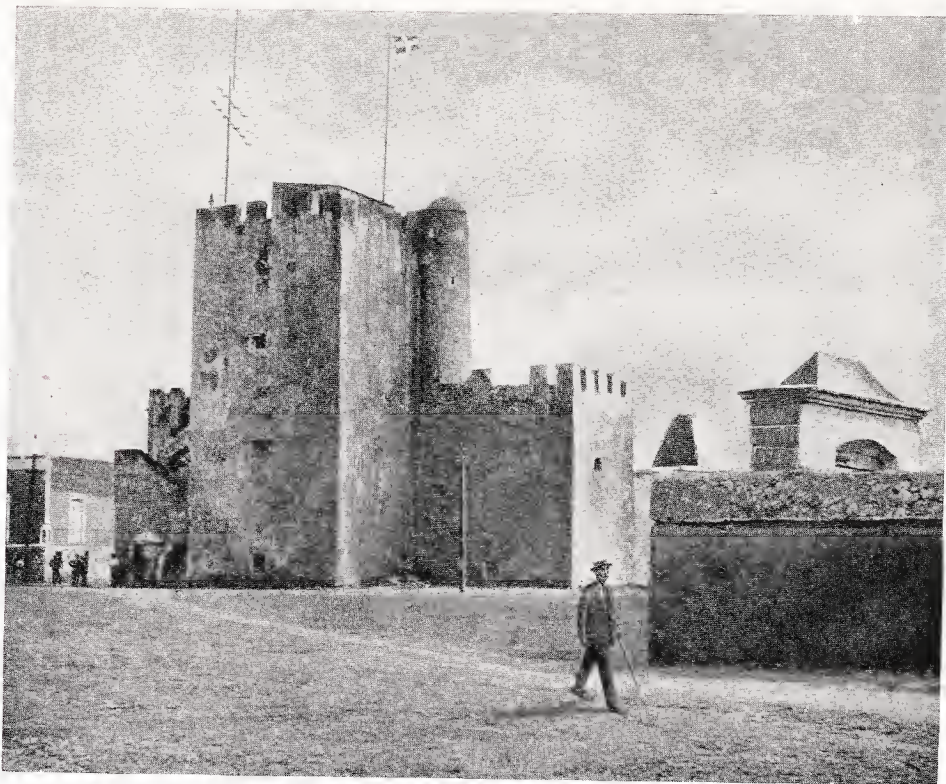
Santo Domingo or the Dominican Republic, together with the Republic of Haiti, forms the second largest island of the Greater Antilles, and though more sparsely populated than Haiti it is the chief division, occupying two-thirds of the island in the east. The country is mountainous, with large forested tracts, which yield enormous quantities of cedar, mahogany, satin woods, and dye woods. Much of the less valuable timber is disposed of as fuel, and in the early morning canoes, laden with firewood, line many a river's edge, while labourers stack the cargoes on the bank, whence they are marketed to the various customers.

Photo, Kello H. Beck



OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS AT THE GATEWAY OF SAN DOMINGO'S FORT

This ancient fort in the city of San Domingo still houses troops and, together with many other time-worn buildings, including the cathedral to which the bones of Christopher Columbus were brought to be buried, and the decaying fortifications, has stoutly resisted the shocks of earthquake and revolution, and stands as a memorial of the past greatness of the first of Spanish-American cities



OLDEST STRONGHOLD ERECTED BY WHITE MEN IN THE NEW WORLD

San Domingo, a seaport, the chief town of the Dominican Republic, and said to be the oldest existing settlement of white men in the New World, possesses many interesting historical relics, among which are the massive but crumbling walls with bastions that surround the town, and the fine old fortress, hoary with age, built soon after the island had been discovered by Christopher Columbus

Domingo naturally make poor labourers, but they are a sober race, drunkenness being but rarely met with. Wages are considerably higher since the Americans "hustled around" and caused the hitherto slothful inhabitants reluctantly to follow their example.

As may be believed, the island has not as yet earned the reputation of a "manufacturing country." The only factories, all employing native labour, are small establishments producing shoes (for home consumption only), ice, candles, soap, aerated waters, harness and saddlery, a small amount of common house furniture, sawmills, and cabinet works.

A fair proportion of men find employment in the placer workings opened by the Spaniards at points along the north coast, in the central ranges, and in the province of San Domingo. Women washing gold in the streams, two or

three years ago found a nugget which was sold in the town for £400. The island, rich in minerals—silver, lead, copper, iron, coal, salt, and petroleum—could probably provide remunerative work for the greater part of the male and for many of the female community, but the time to exploit this wealth has not yet arrived.

Very backward are the people of Santo Domingo in point of education—even the "teachers" being woefully ignorant and lacking training. Education is compulsory, and school attendance is on the increase. Franciscan monks conduct a school in the capital, and there exists also a university with a curriculum about equal to that of a small college on the European or American model. The few private schools are poorly patronised; vocational or manual training establishments are being introduced.

Santo Domingo

II. Through Racial Strife to Enforced Peace

By Percy F. Martin

Author of "Through Five Republics of Central America," etc.

SANTO DOMINGO—known also as San Domingo and the Dominican Republic—forms part of the Caribbean proper, which occupies that part of the ocean-bed lying immediately to the north of South America and the east of Central America. Scenically, it is a beautiful land. Majestic mountains form four-fifths of the island (Mount Tina, the highest peak, stands 10,300 feet above sea-level); verdant valleys and broad plains, swift-flowing rivers—the Ozama and the Isabela, the Jana and the Nizao—provide abundant water; the magnificent Bay of Samaná would easily accommodate the largest of the world's fleets. Defensive works at its entrance would make it impregnable.

The interior of the island abounds in minerals; gold, silver, copper, iron, manganese, platinum, lignite, salt, and petroleum exist; they need but capital and energy to render their exploitation highly profitable. A diverse and generous soil; forests, flora and fauna unexcelled

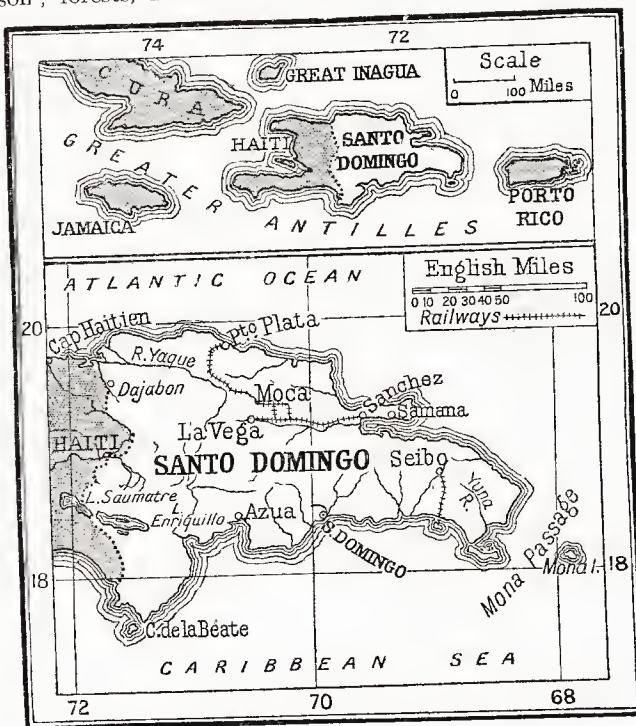
for variety, beauty, and extent, make Santo Domingo a veritable land of desire. That there is room for expansion is shown by the fact that the total area contains only about 897,000 people.

The large island, of which Santo Domingo forms approximately two-thirds (19,325 square miles, and Haiti, which is described in pages 2559-75 of this work, 11,100 square miles) was discovered by Cristóbal Columbus during his first voyage to America (1492), although this was not the first land at which he touched. He called it "Hispaniola." Its earliest white settlers met the fate often meted out to such pioneers. They were murdered by the natives.

Columbus's renewed effort to establish a colony, however, proved more successful; on his second voyage (1493) he founded, and maintained, on the south-east coast the small town of Isabela (named after the wife of his ungrateful sovereign). Other settlements followed, all of which exist to-day. Three years after his second

landing, Columbus and his brother Bartolomé, who had accompanied him and become his vice-regent, were imprisoned in the citadel of San Domingo by the Spanish Governor Bobadilla, a typical tyrant to whose brutal régime may be attributed much of the hatred engendered among the natives for their conquerors.

Set to work in the mines and on the plantations, starved, treated worse than dogs, and finally shipped like cattle to other islands to replace those who had died there under the Spanish lash, these miserable creatures gradually dwindled in number and died out. Physically they had been a fine and fearless race—corsairs of the high seas. Their places were filled by negroes brought from Africa; the first consignment arrived in 1522, the progenitors of the present sturdy black population.



THE REPUBLIC OF SANTO DOMINGO

SANTO DOMINGO & ITS STORY

The Spaniards were not allowed, however, to have things all their own way. Both British and French pirates descended upon the island and considerably harassed the Spaniards, although perhaps less malevolently than they themselves had oppressed the Indians. Buccaneers established themselves upon a small island near the north-east corner of Haiti, and therefrom raided many a fat, heavily-laden Spanish galleon, sailing home on its way from Santo Domingo.

The French eventually won nearly one-third of the island. Establishing themselves in the western section—then known as the Despoplado, and now as Haiti—the French continued their attacks, and at the close of the eighteenth century secured also the eastern section. But Spain again took possession between 1809 and 1821, only however, soon afterwards to lose the entire colony as the result of revolution. Both the eastern and the western section thereupon joined forces, and—after expelling the Spaniards—formed a republic which endured from 1822 until 1844, when separation took place and two independent sovereign states—the Dominican Republic and the Haitian Republic—were created.

Their administrations were maintained by an almost uninterrupted reign of terror. President succeeded president in Santo Domingo, only to murder or to be murdered. Violently divided among themselves, and squandering their by no means abundant financial resources upon prolonged internecine struggles, they fell once more an easy prey to their old and watchful enemies, the Spaniards, who, descending unexpectedly upon the island, took repossession in 1861 and held it

until 1865, when, this time finally, they were expelled from this part of the world.

On the other hand, the Santo Domingans and the Haitians continued at war, all economic progress in either state being suspended as a consequence. In 1869, mainly through North American influence, the two nations were induced to ask for annexation to the United States, and the American President—General Ulysses S. Grant—actually entered into negotiations with President Baez, but was defeated by the Senate.

Comparative internal peace reigned with no more than occasional political uprisings until 1898. Then revolution succeeded revolution, a state of turmoil continuing until the end of 1903. Three Presidents—Jiménez, Vásquez, and Morales—ruled in as many years; each outdid the other in oppression, and all alike helped to bring the country to financial disaster. Default took place in the foreign debt and remains—so far as the British portion is concerned—partially in default still.

A mandatory commission from the United States brought about something like order in 1914, but armed cruisers had to keep at hand (one, the *Memphis*, was lost on the rocks in 1916) for several years. Since then the ordinary system of government has been in abeyance, a military government by United States naval officers, combining the functions of the President and Congress, being maintained. At the end of 1920 a relaxation of the military regime took place.

Over 9,000 claims for damages sustained during the last revolution were presented. More than 6,280 were allowed, being awarded \$4,293,000 (say £840,000).

SANTO DOMINGO: FACTS AND FIGURES

The Country

Occupies eastern and larger portion of the island of Haiti in the West Indies and south-east of Cuba. Mountain ranges interspersed with valleys, many of which are extremely fertile, cover great portion of surface. Intercommunication much impeded by configuration of land. Forests cover large area, while both soil and climate vary considerably. Total area about 19,325 square miles, with an estimated population of about 897,000.

Government and Constitution

Form of government is republican. Constitution provides for a National Congress composed of a Senate of twelve, one Senator for each province, and a Chamber of Deputies with twenty-four members. Senators elected for six, and Deputies for four years. President and Cabinet of seven control executive.

Commerce and Industries

Chief industry is agriculture, sugar, cocoa, cotton, tobacco, and coffee being produced. Cattle are extensively raised. Country is rich in minerals, which include copper, coal, silver, gold,

platinum, rock-salt, and iron. Petroleum, sandstone, and limestone are worked. Exports for 1921 totalled £5,153,512, and imports £6,146,332 for same year. Principal exports are sugar, cocoa, and tobacco, while iron and steel goods, cottons, and foodstuffs are among the chief imports. Standard coin, the U.S.A. dollar.

Communications

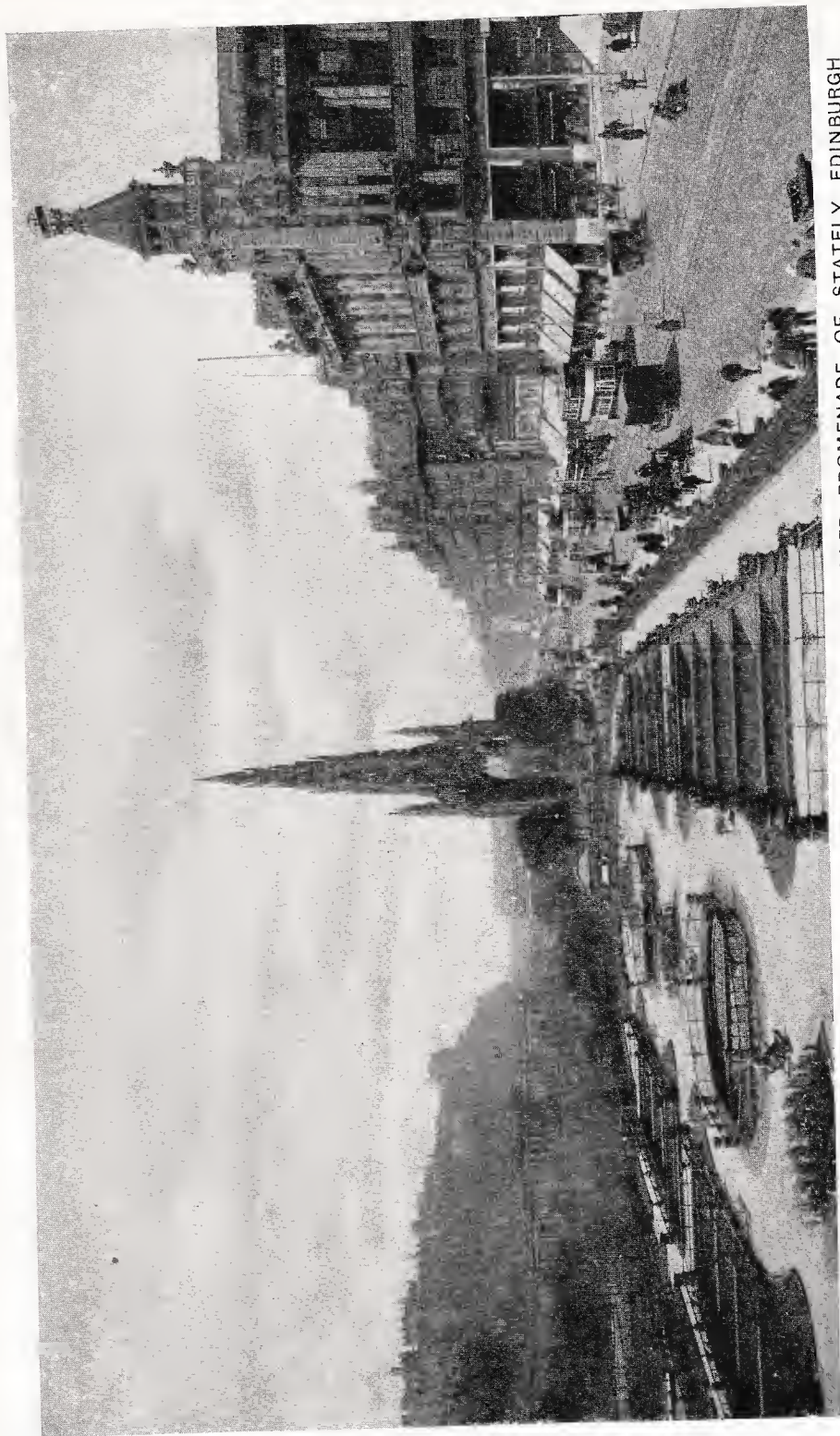
There are some 150 miles of public, and 250 miles of private railway line. Telegraph lines aggregate about 310 miles, and telephone lines about 1,000. There are also some thirty post-offices and several wireless stations.

Religion and Education

State religion is Roman Catholicism, but other creeds are tolerated. Elementary education is free and there are over 950 schools, instructing over 105,000 pupils. A university has been established.

Chief Towns

San Domingo, capital (estimated population 31,000), Puerto Plata (8,000), La Vega (6,500), Azua (4,700), Moca (4,000), Sanchez (3,000).



SCOTLAND : WESTWARD VIEW DOWN PRINCES STREET, THE UNRIVALLED PROMENADE OF STATELY EDINBURGH
 In Princes Street, Edinburgh has as fine a main thoroughfare as any capital city can show. The dominating feature in its splendid prospect is the Castle crowning the hill, on the steep sides of which the historic Old Town is built. The loch intervening between the castle and the superb mile-long boulevard is occupied by Princes Street Gardens, a triumph of horticultural beauty. Above these soars the gothic monument to Sir Walter Scott, on the left of which the Greek structure of the Royal Scottish Academy is here shown, with the Caledonian Station and hotel at the end of the magnificent vista

Photo, Francis Caird Inglis